Delaware Office Of Highway Safety Activates July 4th Statewide DUI Checkpoints + Soberlift Program At The Beaches

The Delaware Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is once again implementing a multi-tiered strategy to encourage responsible driving behaviors and, ultimately, create safer roadways throughout Delaware during the Fourth of July holiday. The OHS SoberLift program, presented in partnership with Lyft®, will be activated in Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Dewey Beach, Bethany Beach, South Bethany Beach, Fenwick Island, and Ocean View nightly from 7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. beginning Thursday, July 1 and continuing through Monday, July 5, ending at 2:00 a.m.

A key component of the campaign is the opportunity for individuals to receive free Lyft® vouchers* enabling them to "ride sober." A discount code for a maximum \$15 Lyft® value can be redeemed by **texting "SOBERLIFT" to 99000**. The Lyft® opportunity works hand in hand with a robust communications campaign throughout the Delaware beaches over the holiday weekend, and DUI checkpoints implemented by state and local law enforcement statewide (see below for dates and locations).

"The Fourth of July is about coming together and celebrating what unites us. Sadly, it is also an all-too-often deadly time on Delaware roads. Before you head out for your celebrations, remember to plan ahead and arrange for a sober ride home," Kimberly Chesser, Director, Delaware Office of Highway Safety. "Deaths and serious injuries caused by impaired driving are preventable, and too many lives are tragically cut short in traffic crashes involving alcohol- and drug-impaired

Throughout the July Fourth SoberLift initiative, OHS will engage in a steady stream of messaging that encourages drivers and passengers to understand the risks and potential consequences of driving while impaired and to plan for a sober ride before the celebration begins. To achieve its goals, OHS will be communicating with the community through print and digital advertising; social media; table tents, posters, and sandwich boards in public areas, restaurants, and retailers throughout Delaware beach towns, in addition to public relations efforts. OHS encourages drivers to use its recently launched Arrive Alive DE Impaired Driving Simulator available at arrivealivede.com/drive-sober—a first-of-its-kind augmented reality tool to help website visitors see the potential effects of impairment on driving. The "drive sober" website page also houses the new BAC Calculator tool to help website visitors understand the different levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) which refers to the percentage of alcohol in a person's bloodstream. In Delaware, a person is legally intoxicated if they have a BAC of 0.08% or higher.

Additional support will come from community partners helping to distribute educational materials and influence the unique community they serve. Most notably, the State of Delaware Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement will be distributing SoberLift materials to bars and restaurants in beach communities as well as engaging staff and other groups in discussion of ways they can impact positive behavior by, for example, adhering to over-pouring regulations.

"The SoberLift program allows the <u>Delaware Division of Alcohol</u> and <u>Tobacco Enforcement</u> the opportunity to work with our partners at Delaware Office of Highway Safety in promoting positive behavior by beach area bars and restaurants and helping to ensure our citizens and Delaware roadways are safer during the holiday weekend," *Chief John A. Yeomans, Delaware Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement*.

Sponsors of this *SoberLift* program include Breakthru Beverage DE, Captain Morgan, Two Stones, Grain Craft Bar + Kitchen, First State Brew Bus, Washington Street Ale House/Oyster House, Dewey Business Partnership, Bluecoast Seafood, and Grill Rehoboth, The Starboard, Liquid Alchemy Brewing, and Aloysius Butler & Clark (AB&C).

"Since 2018, over 1,200 people across Delaware have used OHS's SoberLift program during Fourth of July, and other periods prone to higher incidence rates for DUI arrests and crashes rather than possibly drive home impaired. The campaign is a success due to these people making the responsible decision to make a plan for a sober ride home before the celebrating begins," Cynthia Cavett, Marketing Specialist II & Public Information Officer, Delaware Office of Highway Safety.

July 4th DUI Checkpoints Activated Statewide

Three sobriety checkpoints are scheduled for the upcoming holiday weekend beginning Friday, July 2 at 10 p.m. and continuing into Saturday, July 3 at 2 a.m. The checkpoints are part of a weekend-long mobilization educating Delawareans to secure a sober ride home before starting their celebration festivities.

The following are the scheduled checkpoint locations for the holiday weekend:

- New Castle County Route 72 near Newark
- Kent County U.S. 13 near Dover
- Sussex County State Route 24 near Millsboro

The Independence Day holiday DUI checkpoint activation will include sixty-six law enforcement officers from fifteen local, county, and municipal police agencies in addition to Delaware State Police. At least one Drug Recognition Enforcement (DRE) officer will be part of the checkpoint activation in each county. The checkpoint locations are in targeted areas known

to have a high number of DUI arrests and crashes including both injuries and fatalities.

OHS reminds drivers and passengers that in addition to alcohol and illegal drugs, medications prescribed by a healthcare provider and even some over-the-counter drugs can impair driving and may carry severe penalties.

Impaired Driving Statistics for Delaware

Over the period of 5 years from 2016-2020, drivers between the ages of 35 to 44 have shown the highest numbers of DUI crashes, with drivers 20 to 29 trailing behind. In the agegender groups, it seems that age 20-29 and 35-44 males are the biggest contributors to this trend. Saturday typically has the highest number of DUI-related crashes, followed closely by Sunday for the 5-year average. The times where DUI-related crashes occur the most are:

- Friday 9 p.m. 12 a.m.
- Saturday 9 p.m. 12 a.m.
- Sunday 12 a.m. 3 a.m.
- Saturday 12 a.m. 3 a.m.

Over the July Fourth holiday weekend in 2020 (July 2 - 5, 2020):

- 52 DUI arrests were made over the holiday period (July 2 5, 2020)
- 24 DUI-related crashes resulted in:
 - 13 injuries
 - 4 fatalities

For more information, visit https://www.arrivealivede.com/drive-sober/.

*The number of daily SoberLift codes available will be limited.

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■ About the Delaware Office of Highway Safety

The Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is committed to improving the safety of Delaware's motoring public by focusing on behavioral traffic safety issues, such as impaired driving, seat belt use, speeding, child passenger safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, and teen driving issues. Follow the Delaware Office of Highway Safety on ArriveAliveDE.com, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.